



BILLING CODE 3510-DS-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

Subsidy Programs Provided by Countries Exporting Softwood Lumber and Softwood Lumber Products to the United States; Request for Comment

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce (Department) seeks public comment on any subsidies, including stumpage subsidies, provided by certain countries exporting softwood lumber or softwood lumber products to the United States during the period July 1 through December 31, 2012.

DATES: Comments must be submitted within thirty days after publication of this notice.

ADDRESSES: See the Submission of Comments section below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James Terpstra, Import Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: (202) 482-3965.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On June 18, 2008, section 805 of Title VIII of the Tariff Act of 1930 (the Softwood Lumber Act of 2008) was enacted into law. Under this provision, the Secretary of Commerce is mandated to submit to the appropriate Congressional committees a report every 180 days on any subsidy provided by countries exporting softwood lumber or softwood lumber products to the United States, including stumpage subsidies.

The Department submitted its last subsidy report on December 17, 2012. As part of its newest report, the Department intends to include a list of subsidy programs identified with sufficient clarity by the public in response to this notice.

Request for Comments

Given the large number of countries that export softwood lumber and softwood lumber products to the United States, we are soliciting public comment only on subsidies provided by countries whose exports accounted for at least one percent of total U.S. imports of softwood lumber by quantity, as classified under Harmonized Tariff Schedule code 4407.1001 (which accounts for the vast majority of imports), during the period July 1 through December 31, 2012. Official U.S. import data published by the United States International Trade Commission Tariff and Trade DataWeb indicate that only one country, Canada, exported softwood lumber to the United States during that time period in amounts sufficient to account for at least one percent of U.S. imports of softwood lumber products. We intend to rely on similar previous six-month periods to identify the countries subject to future reports on softwood lumber subsidies. For example, we will rely on U.S. imports of softwood lumber and softwood lumber products during the period January 1 through June 30, 2013, to select the countries subject to the next report.

Under U.S. trade law, a subsidy exists where a government authority: (i) provides a financial contribution; (ii) provides any form of income or price support within the meaning of Article XVI of the GATT 1994; or (iii) makes a payment to a funding mechanism to provide a financial contribution to a person, or entrusts or directs a private entity to make a financial contribution, if providing the contribution would normally be vested in the government and the practice does not differ in substance from practices normally followed by governments, and a benefit is thereby conferred. See section 771(5)(B) of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended.

Parties should include in their comments: (1) the country which provided the subsidy; (2) the name of the subsidy program; (3) a brief description (at least 3-4 sentences) of the subsidy program; and (4) the government body or authority that provided the subsidy.

Submission of Comments

Persons wishing to comment should file comments by the date specified above. Comments should only include publicly available information. The Department will not accept comments accompanied by a request that a part or all of the material be treated confidentially due to business proprietary concerns or for any other reason. The Department will return such comments or materials to the persons submitting the comments and will not include them in its report on softwood lumber subsidies. The Department requests submission of comments filed in electronic Portable Document Format (PDF) submitted on CD-ROM or by e-mail to the email address of the IA Webmaster, below.

The comments received will be made available to the public in PDF on the Import Administration website at the following address: <http://ia.ita.doc.gov/public-comments.html>. Any questions concerning file formatting, access on the Internet, or other electronic filing issues should be addressed to Laura Merchant, Import Administration Webmaster, at (202) 482-0367, e-mail address: mailto:webmaster_support@trade.gov.

All comments and submissions in response to this Request for Comment should be received by the Department no later than 5 p.m., on the above-referenced deadline date.

Christian Marsh
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Antidumping and Countervailing Duty Operations

(Dated)
April 18, 2013.

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